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AN
E S S A Y
ON
WAYS and MEANS

FOR
Improving the Inland NAVIGATION
AND
Increasing the Number of SAILORS
in Great-Britain. K

Humbly offered to the CONSIDERATION of
PARLIAMENT.



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A N

ESSAY, &c.

TH E Strength and Riches of all Kingdoms are calculated from the Number of their well-employed Inhabitants. A Kingdom with large extended Territories, and but few Subjects, must be of small Consequence, and make but a small Figure in the World, tho' a large one in the Map. Of this, *Spain* is a glaring Instance: Before that Kingdom extended its Territories beyond the Proportion of its Subjects, it made a very considerable Figure in *Europe*: But since their immense Acquisitions in the Golden World, tho' Masters of all the Treasures in *America*, they are now the most despicable State in *Europe*. But

A Number of Subjects (*unless profitably and usefully employed*) are not of any real Advantage or Strength

to the Government they live under: A Nation of Beggars, however numerous, *must* be a Burden to their Masters, and often prove a very troublesome Task to govern. *Pride, Rapine and Rebellion are the constant Attendants of Poverty.* If a People cannot by their Labour earn a Subsistence, they must steal or rob from such as can. If they are furnished this Way, they must soon forget Labour, and pursue these Courses that will satisfy their Wants with the smallest Fatigue to their Persons. This must naturally set such a Nation at Variance with their Governors, who would attempt to restrain their Licentiousness; begets in them an Aversion to all Policy, and puts them upon Endeavours to shake off a Yoke that must seem irksome to them. *Thus, we see, Seditions and Rebellions are the constant Produce of these Countries, where the Inhabitants are poor and idle.* And

To these same Causes may be attributed *that ungovernable Temper and Impatience under legal Restraint*, that distinguishes the *Highlanders of North-Britain* from all others in the *Island*; they are absolutely poor, and in their own Country scarcely capable (*as Matters are now managed*) to earn a wretched Subsistence. As they are Strangers for the most Part to Traffick, have little or no Communication with the rest of Mankind, they have contracted a Fierceness in their Manner. Having nothing to lose, they are desperate in their Undertakings; and, by Custom, have imbibed an Affection to an unsettled and licentious Way of Living; and, of Necessity,

ceffity, are obliged to pay an implicate Obedience to the Commands and Interests of their Chiefs, by whose Bounty and Connivance they are only enabled to keep Soul and Body together.

This Dependance, which the Necessity of the People, and the mistaken Notions of their Chiefs daily increases, has been, and always must be the Occasion of many Disturbances in that Part of the united Kingdoms.

Half a Million of People which now possess the *Higblands* and adjacent *Isles*, are so far from being a Strength to the Government, that their Necessities lay them always open to be practised upon by those who have any Interest to disturb the Peace of the State. Their licentious Manner of living, their natural Hardiness, Activity and Fierceness, make them fit Instruments to execute any Undertaking. And so, we see, let the Government be what it will, these Men have been the chief Support and Abettors of all Insurrections that at any Time has disturb'd it.

This Poverty of these People is neither occasioned by their natural Situation, nor to want of personal Abilities; but is owing intirely to a *Misapplication of their Talents, and a Want of a small Fund to begin and animate the first Attempts towards Industry.*

It is true, their Soil is not universally rich; yet their Mountains produce a very great Plenty of Herbage fit for feeding of Cattle, of which they have great Plenty, and their Valleys have many
rich

rich Veins of Earth fit for producing any kind of Grain, if rightly cultivated : To this they are very much Strangers. The Inside of their Mountains are mostly replenished with rich *Mines* of *Lead* and *Copper*. These natural Advantages, if properly cultivated, would be of great Use to their Possessors; but not half so much as the Advantages that might arise from a prudent Management of the Herrings, Cod and Ling, that are to be had on all their Shores. Of the first of these the *Dutch* reap the whole Advantage, and draw from the Shores of this barren Tract of Land more Riches to their own Country than centers in *Spain* of all the Riches of *Peru* and *Mexico*. The famous Pensioner *De Witt* admits, that the *Dutch* employed 200000 Seamen in fishing and transporting the Fish taken on the Coast of *Great-Britain*, and caught and cured in his Time above 400000 Last, which he computes to be worth eighty Million of Guilders, very near eight Million Sterling. It is true, since that Time, the *Dutch* Fishing has declined; but what they lost has been taken up by the *Norwegians*, *Danes* and *French*. The Fish taken on our Shores by Foreigners are still the same, the Inhabitants of *Great-Britain* not having increased in their Share of this useful Branch.

It must surprize all the thinking Part of Mankind to see *Great-Britain* going to War with the *Emperor* and all *Europe* to procure a Share of the Trade of the *East-Indies*, waging War with *Spain*, and employing Millions to preserve the Trade of the

the *West-Indies* and the *Mediterranean*, and yet neglecting a Branch of Trade within its own Dominions, that of itself would employ ten times the Number of Hands, and, on a Balance, bring into the Kingdom ten times more Riches than all these Trades put together. For it is certain, if *Britain* would assert its exclusive Right of Fishing on its own Coasts, (a much more natural one than the *Spaniards* of searching on theirs) it behoved to follow, that *Britain* must gain eight Millions by the Trade, and employ 200000 Sailors, and about ten times as many Hands on Shore to supply the Shipping. Such an Increase of Riches and real Strength as would be worth going to War for, and spending some Millions in the Prosecution of.

But, if it should be thought ungenerous and invidious to desire a *Monopoly* of the whole, and the Advantages, tho' great, not worth the falling out with our Neighbours about; a Share of it at least is worth the looking for, if it can be gained at a small Expence, as it certainly may: For the Situation of the Highlands of *Scotland* to the Main of that Fishery is such, that with small Pains the Inhabitants of these Parts may be enabled to undersell all the Fishers in *Europe*, the most infallible Method to gain a Branch of Trade.

There has been several Attempts to encourage this Fishery, which have all proved abortive. There are at present very considerable Encouragements given to private Persons to make it advantageous
for

for such to prosecute it with Vigour ; but the Success does not answer Expectation, nor the Expence laid out upon it ; and instead of enabling us to vie at foreign Markets with our Rivals, these very Encouragements have been a great Means to confirm them in the Trade.

I shall briefly run over the State of the Fishery at present, remark the most obvious Causes of our Miscarriages, and offer at some Hints to put the Fishing upon a prosperous Footing, and remove the Obstacles that lie in its Way.

That small Share which we enjoy of the Herring-fishing is carried on in this Manner ;

Those *Skoals* of Herrings coming from the Northern Seas, that pass between the Islands of *Shetland*, *Orkneys*, and the Main, are in these deep *Sounds* fished for by the *Dutch*, where we take a religious Care never to disturb them, and are again detached in smaller Shoals into the Creeks, Locks and Bays of shallow Water, that lie along the *North* and *North-western* Shores of *Scotland*, where we search for them ; these are only the weaker sort of Herrings, that are not able to stem the Currents, which set along that Coast from the *Western Ocean*, which is one main and principal Reason that our Herrings will never draw at a foreign Market so great a Price as those of the *Dutch*. All the Herrings taken by the *Scots*, (except those in *Lochfine*) are so small, that it will take nine hundred to fill a Barrel,

Barrel, whilst of those fish'd by the *Dutch* in deep Water, five or six hundred packs a Barrel ; an Odds in Quality that must give great Odds at any Market.

These small Herrings are fished by the Natives in small Boats, of about 40 Barrel Burden, and sold by them to Vessels of between 50 and 60 Tuns, that attend from Place to Place on these Coasts, with Salt and Barrels, on purpose to buy them. They are sold by the Fishers by the Crane, which is the full of a Barrel, from Sixpence to Three Shillings. Two Barrels green will make about one Barrel of salted and packed Herrings; they are then gutted, and immediately salted and barrel'd, either on the Shore, or on board, by the Merchant, who seldom gives himself more Trouble about them, unless he re-packs them once, and in this Condition he sends them to a foreign Market.

If it is to a warm Climate, it is ten to one but they rot: And to whatever Country they are sent, they surely rust, or gild (as they call it); are black at the Bone, and never bought whilst there is a *Dutch* Herring in the Market, and afterward only by the poorer Sort; being really only fit for Hogs, and give a Price accordingly: Inasmuch that, if it were not for the *Debenture*, and the Method of imposing in that Article on the Crown, no Merchant would be concerned in the Trade. And as it is, there is scarce one in ten of any Character that meddles with it. The Reason is, if he takes no more than the

Legal Bounty allowed by the Government; considering the Attendance of his Vessel for six Months, the Risque he runs of not getting a Cargo after all this certain Expence, and the Prime Cost of the Herrings themselves, the unhappy manner of curing what he buys, he cannot expect to draw a Price that will bring him even his own Money. In this Shape, no wise Man will employ his Stock above once; those that do, either are ruined, or must fall into Measures of defrauding the Government, to reimburse their Expence, which no Merchant of Reputation will care to meddle with.

Such is the wretched Condition of this Fishing. The first Error in Management worthy Observation is the Smallness of the Fishing Vessels employed, which are open Boats, and not able to carry a sufficient Quantity of Lines and Nets for fishing in deep Water. The *Scotch* Trustees appointed for encouraging Fisheries and Manufactures have been sensible of this Error, and has given an Encouragement of forty Shillings *per* Tun to every Vessel furnished with Nets and other Implements, that exceeds 30 or 40 Tun. This Encouragement is considerable; but the largeness of the Vessel required is an effectual Bar to the Success desired; for, tho' for several Years that *Premium* has been offered, there are but very few who have accepted.

The *Dutch* indeed use Vessels of this Burden, but of a great many below it. The Reason they use Vessels of so large a Bulk is, that they are obliged to land

land these Herrings in *Holland* before they carry them to Market. It is evident, as they have so great a Run, it is their Interest to have large Vessels, that will carry something worth the length of their Voyage: This is not our Case. The deep Waters where they fish, is in no Place above four Leagues from Shore, where they may carry their Herrings, as often as they have taken a Loading, without a Day's Hindrance to their Fishing. Now,

Every Man who lies convenient for the Fishing, is not able to build a Vessel of that Bulk. This Observation the Event justifies. There is not one Buss in *Scotland*, belonging to the Natives of those Shores, that are contiguous to the Fishing: The few that are, belong to Merchants, who fit them out at double the Disadvantage the Natives could.

Vessels at twelve, or at most fifteen Ton, of a proper Mould, and Decked, would carry as many Nets and Lines as would be necessary to keep on board till they were brought on Shore, would answer to all Intents and Purposes for the Fishing, as well as the large ones, and have these manifest Advantages, they would be easier purchased, three or four of the Natives joining would be able to compass the Price of one of these, whilst a hundred of them are not able to muster up the Price of a large Buss. In the next Place, when Storm and the Season of the Year would put an End to the Fishing in deep Water, these small Vessels and all their Tackling could be employed in Shallow Water, which the

larger could not: This would render the Fishing less precarious than at present, as it could scarcely happen that it would misgive both in deep Water and shallow in the same Year. Besides

The Season for the deep Fishing is always over before that in *Creeks* and *Locks* begins; except in the *Lock* before mentioned, where the Fishing begins very near as early as in the deep Water, and continues for 4 Months; after that is over, and after the *Herring* Season is over these same Vessels might be employed in *Cod* and *Ling* Fishing 'till the Return of the same Season again; which Vessels of a larger Bulk are not proper for, on these Shores.

The next Disadvantage I shall observe, is, the, at least, impolitick, (if not ill-warranted Exactions) of the *Proprietors* of the Shores where the *Fishing* is carried on. His Grace the *Duke of Argile* makes a Demand of 16 *Shillings* and 8 *Pence* from every Boat that has catch'd 2 Herrings in the Season within the Bounds of his Grace's Jurisdiction, which extends, in Respect to this Tax, from *Pentland Firth* to the *Mull of Galloway*, which comprehends the whole of the *Fishing-Shore*.

When these poor *Fishers* have paid his Grace this Toll, they are obliged in the Prosecution of their *Fishing* to pay to the *Proprietors* of the *Shores* that lie *North* of the *Shire* of *Argile* the same Imposition, and that as often as they shall happen to *fish* on the Coasts of different *Proprietors*, which
may

may be three or four Times in a Year. Others of these *Proprietors* oblige their Tennants, or such as *fish* within their Bounds, to pay them every *fish* Day's *fish*ing, and to sell the other *four* to whom they please, and at what *Price* they please. If the *Fishers*, for their Conveniency, land any of their *Fish* upon the *Beach*, they are obliged to pay what Exaction these *northern Proprietors* or their *Bailiffs* shall judge proper, and for the Use of useless *Brushwood*, or *Heath* for *firing*, as great a *Price* as if it were purchased in the City of *London*.

By the Means of these repeated Exactions, there is not one of these small Boats, whose intrinsic Value, with all her Tackling, is scarce worth *ten Pounds*, but must pay a Duty of betwixt *forty Shillings* and *three Pounds* every *fish*ing Season; besides, these poor People being obliged, at the *Whim* of one or other of these *Proprietors*, to leave their *fish*ing, perhaps when at the *height*, to give Attendance at their Courts as often as they please, under the *Penalty* of severe *Fines*.

I cannot help owning myself at a loss to find out upon what Grounds the *Proprietors* of these *Shores* establish their Right to this Duty. I can find no *Statute* that warrants this Exaction, tho' I am convinced nothing less than a *Statute* can justify such Demands. But whether these Exactions are claimed under a just or an unjust Title, it must appear evident to Mankind, that they are not calculated for encouraging the *Herring Fishery*.
They

They discourage those People from pursuing it chearfully, since they know a great Part of their Labour is not for themselves, but for those who have no Regard to a Disappointment in the Season, and must have their Toll whether legal or illegal, or whether or not the *Fishers* have made as much the whole Year as their Demands amount to; and this must necessarily increase the prime Cost of the Fish, and hinder the more substantial Sort of the Natives from being concerned in a Trade which subjects them to certain Expence, and is in itself *precarious*.

It is impossible to make any thing of *Slaves* but *Slaves*, except Liberty and Property is secured to these People in some Measure equal to the rest of his Majesty's Subjects; all Undertakings in which they are necessary must move in a slow Pace, and miscarry *ten times for once* they succeed; and *Encouragements* and *Premiums* for Exportation are useless, unless the *Fishers* are invited to *fish* by at least securing their Property in what they fish, and protecting them during the Season from the Tyranny of their *petty Chieftains*. If *Fish* is taken, and the Merchant can purchase them at a moderate Price, there is no fear but they will be carried to Market.

The *next Error* in our *Herring-fishing*, is, the Practice of the Merchant in *freighting* a Vessel, which he loads in the Month of *July* with *Salt*, *Casks* and *Provisions* necessary for the fishing; with which Vessel he attends on these *Shores*, always following

lowing the *Fishers* from Place to Place, until after *Christmas* at least six Months. This is a *terrible* Article of certain Expence added to the *prime Cost* and other Contingencies of the *Herrings*; an Expence the *Dutch* shun for the most part, tho' they have more Reason to follow that Practice than we. Their general Method is, so soon as a *Buss* has caught her *Loading*, she returns to some of the Ports of *Holland*, where the *Fish* are properly cured, and there the Merchant buys them, and not till then. Sometimes indeed it happens, that a large Vessel goes from one of those Ports on account of the *Fishers* in that Part, and is loaded so soon as she comes, and immediately sent back, whilst the *Busses* remain at the *fishing*. But it never was known, that a Vessel was freighted by a Merchant in *Holland*, and sent to attend the *Fishers* to buy up a Cargo; nor does ever one of these few *Carriage* Vessels leave *Holland* till she is certain that her *Cargo* is *fished*; whereas our Merchantmen are there perhaps a Month or two before a Herring is fished, and not one in ten of them make their *Loading* in the Season.

This prodigious Expence, which is more than *two Thirds* of the Value of the *Herrings* when cured, might be saved, if the Merchants would agree not to buy any *Herrings* till they were brought to Shore, and likewise agree upon some Place centrical to the *fishing* on Shore, where they might have their Factors to buy up the *Herrings* when brought to them; such a Place might be found that would not be
twenty

twenty Leagues distant from any Part of the Fishing; Such a Mart would save all that vast Expence, and bring the Herrings to the Merchant, at least, one half cheaper than at present, and allow the Fisher one half more than he gets. It would make the universal Price of Herrings more certain by all the Fish coming to one *Market*; whereas, at present, there is nothing more uncertain; They shall perhaps be giving in one *Creek* three Shillings *per Crane*, whilst in another not ten Miles distant, they shall be sold for twelve Pence; and this Difference is not owing to the Odds of the Quantity of *Herrings* taken in either, but to some Accident that determined more of the Merchants Ships to remain in the one *Creek* than in the other. Another Advantage, superior to all the rest, is, that the Herrings, in such a Case, might be properly cured, by the Help of a few skilful Salters, which in the present Management, would require an infinite Number.

The next Error I shall observe, is, a Practice amongst the Merchants, of endeavouring to engage the Fishing-Boats to sell their Herrings to them by a certain stated Bounty, in this Manner. As soon as a Merchantman comes up to the Fleet, he engages as many Boats as he can, by promising each of them every Week, and some every Day, such a certain Quantity of Spirits, so much Bread, and so much Meat, whether they kill or not, over and above the Price of the Herrings. Every Merchant vying with another, has raised these Perquisites to an

an exorbitant Height, and adds vastly to the certain Expence of the Fishing; is, in the main, an unfair way of Trade; a kind of fore-stalling of the Market; makes the Fishers lazy, when they know they are to have their Perquisites, kill or not kill. Tho' it inhances the Price of the Commodity to the Merchant, yet the Fisher has but a nominal Value for his Fish; the principal Article of these Perquisites being adulterated *French* Brandy, of no real Advantage to the poor Man's Family. It is true, Spirits are necessary for his Support; but if he was to receive Money only for his Herrings, tho' he would buy some Spirits, yet 'tis reasonable to suspect he would not drink so much as he does, when he foolishly imagines he gets it for nothing: For, when the Fisher is raising the Perquisites, he imagines them all for nothing; not being sagacious enough to comprehend, that the more he gets in this manner, the less the Merchant is able to give him for his Herrings in Specie, whose Price is not ascertain'd at this previous Bargain. Since I have mentioned Spirits, I cannot here help taking Notice of a villanious kind of Barter carried on with these poor People; that is, of *French* Brandy that never paid Duty, and Tobacco, for which the Merchant has drawn Debenture. This is so much practised, that I speak within Bounds when I aver, that two Thirds of the Price of the Herrings is paid the Fishers in these two Articles; by which Means, *France* and the Smugler run away with two Thirds of the small Fishing we have.

The next Error in Management, which I shall take Notice of, regards the Method of curing, in which we are miserably mistaken; and, till that Error is mended, all our preceding Labour must be in vain; and we need not expect to vie with the *Dutch* in any Market, let us purchase never so cheap, unless we can say, they are as good as theirs. *The Property of a well pickled Herring, is to be clean on the outside, white at the Bone when broken, and so firm, that they bear to bend the Tail upon the Head, without breaking. The Disease they are most liable to, is to rot; its Symptoms are Blackness and Brittleness of the Fish, and rusting on the outside.* These are occasioned either by Blood remaining in the Fish, or their not being purged from a Slime and Oil that is about them when taken. The fatter Herrings are, they have more of the last; but if that is not taken from them, they will rust, if they were to be put in a Salt Mine; this is only to be done by changing the Pickles, compressing the Herrings, and scumming the Oil.

The Method the *Dutch* use is as follows. So soon as the Herrings are taken out of the Nets, they are gutted, are salted in the Hold of the Buss in Bulk, where they lie and purge away the Blood; and by their Weight upon one another, and additional Weights put upon them, they are compressed, and the Oil, by that Means, squeezed out of them. When they are landed in *Holland*, they are taken out of the Hold; a clean and strong Pickle made for them; in Part of which they are washed and
barrelled

barrelled up; and as they are packing, they are beat down with a heavy Weight, or Screw, at several Distances in the Barrel, which is heaped up full, and a Weight laid upon it, till it subsides. After they have remained in the Barrel for some Time, they are taken out, and again re-packed, with the same Pressures as before; the Head is then forced in, and the Barrel blown: It is then laid upon its Side, and the Bung taken out: About the Mouth of the Bung is placed some Clay, about an Inch high; the Barrel is then filled up with clean new Pickle, to the Brim of the Clay. All the Barrels being thus used, a Man goes round every one of them with a Mallet, and beats upon the Ends and Sides of the Barrels once every two Hours; if there is any Oil in the Barrel, it rises by Degrees to the Top of the Brim that is surrounded with the Clay, and is then skimmed off, and the Clay always kept full: This is continued till no more Oil appears, when the Barrels are bunged up, and are fit for any Market.

The Method at present practised by the *Scotch*, is only; So soon as the Herrings are gutted, they barrel them, and press them a little in packing; in the Barrel they remain for some Time, and are, at last, re-packed with the same Salt and Pickle, with a little more pressing; the Barrel is then closed up, and sent to Market. The Difference in the Management is plain, and the Consequences obvious. In the Hold, or by salting in Bulk any where else, the Herrings are purged from

Blood and Filth; all this goes into the first *Scotch* Barrel, and so into the second. By their lying in Bulk, they are more compressed, and the Oil better squeezed out of them; whereas the *Scotch* Herrings, by the Oil, are always rusty; and, for want of compressing, the Barrel, when it comes to Market, wants a Fifth of being full.

At present, as the Fishing is managed, it is almost impossible to put it under any Regulation: But if it was carried on by Boats of 15 Tun, which a small Encouragement, perhaps of twenty Shillings *per* Tun for every Vessel above ten Tun, properly deck'd, rigg'd, and furnished with proper Implements for the deep Water, would bring it to; these Vessels might salt in their Holds a Fortnight's or a Month's Fishing, and then bring them to such a Mart as is above proposed, where a few skilful Salters, properly instructed, and encouraged at the publick Expence, would soon bring them to go through the rest of the Aparatus.

The next Misfortune we labour under, is, the dangerous Practices used in obtaining fraudulent *Debentures*. The Government allow half a *Crown* for every Barrel of *Herrings* salted with foreign Salt, and exported. These *Herrings* are chiefly exported from the *Custom-house* of *Stornua*, *Fort-William* and *Cambeltoun*; all three Places (but especially the two first) of no Trade, and the legal Perquisites of the Officers so few, and their settled Appointment so small, that its almost *morally* impossible they can live

live without spunging on the Subject, and conniving at Frauds in the *Revenue*. Few People of a liberal Education, or that can be better provided for, caring to go to so remote Parts ; The Consequence of this, is, that a great many of those who are concerned in this Trade, go with a premeditated Design to impose upon the Government. Their first Step is, when their Ship is registrated by tipping the *Officer* who measures : She is certified to be *price* her real Burden. They next enter, perhaps, *ten* Times more than the Quantity of Salt they have on Board ; in this Manner ; the Vessel is supposed to be but fifty *Tun* in Reality ; but the *Officer* supposes her to be 150 : There is, perhaps, 10 *Tun* of Salt on Board, which, by means of some empty Cask, is raised up to the Mouth of the Hatch ; by this Means the Ship to the *Officer* appears full. He is not at the Trouble of examining or measuring, but makes a gross Computation from the supposed Bulk of the Ship, and receives the small Duty accordingly, and gives Credit to the Merchant for exporting as many *Barrels* of *Herrings* as there are Bushels in 150 *Tun*.

The Salt thus entered, the Merchant goes in Search of his *Herrings*, if he makes as many *Barrels* as his Ship will carry, its well ; but, if he should chance to make but a couple of *Last*, it will answer his Turn. The empty *Barrels* are put first in the *Hold*, and whatever Number of full ones there are on Top, he now comes to make out his Deben-
 ture. The *Officer* to make a Shew of Diligence, per-
 haps,

haps, looks at the first or second *Tyre* of full *Barrels*, sees the Vessel is full, computes how many *Barrels* a Ship of her supposed Burden will carry, and for that Number makes out to the Merchant a *Debenture*. Thus we see *Debenture* is paid for 150 *Tuns* of *Herrings*, when in Reality, there are not exported above three or four *Tuns*: If the *Fraud* stopped here, it would be tolerable; but not satisfied with this, the Ship is entered under different Names in 2 or 3 different Ports, where the same *Scene* is constantly acted over as was mentioned first. I will not pretend to charge all the Dealers with these *Frauds*; but, that a great Number of them practice this is undeniable. The Consequences are, that People of small and indigent Fortunes engage in this Trade with no View of making Profit by the Fish, but by imposing on the Government; this tempts them to buy from the Fishers at an extravagant Price, the few they take makes them careless of the Manner of curing, their Profit not depending on the Quality, but the Number of *Barrels* they can muster up to make a Show, enables them to undersel the fair Trader, if any there are; and yet all this immense *Fraud* cannot give them the Preference, at any Market, to the *Dutch Herrings*, because of the wretched Manner they cure them: *And this is an evident Demonstration, that an Improvement in their Quality is the only Means to give us a Chance for a Share in that Trade.*

These are the many Errors in Management that hinder us from enjoying a Branch of Trade, that
Nature

Nature seems to have thrown in our Mouths, but *Tantalus-like*, we have not as yet *the Power to use it*. Its not improbable but the Knowledge of our Errors is half way towards amending them. And, perhaps, the Methods hinted at above might be effectual; *To wit*, that the Encouragement of 40 *Shillings per Tun* now given to Vessels of 40 *Tun*, and upwards employed in *Fishing* be converted to a *Premium* of 20 *Shillings per Tun*, to every Vessel above twelve *Tun* properly equipped for the *deep Water fishing*. Secondly, that no Merchant be allowed to buy Herrings till they are brought to Shore. Thirdly, that a central Place be appointed, where Merchants might keep *Factors* to buy *Herrings* for them. Fourthly, That a *Custom-house* be settled in that Place for clearing out *Herrings* for Export, and that none be cleared out for Export, but in that one *Port*. Fifthly, That in that *Port*, there should reside four or five Commissioners with *genteel Salaries*, whose Business it should be to inspect a proper Number of *Salters* in the *curing* of all *Herrings* designed for Export; that the *Salters* should have *Salaries* from the *Government*, besides 2 Pence *per Barrel* from the Merchants; that these Commissioners supposed to be Men skilled in *Fishing*, should have Power to lay down Rules to the *Salters* for their Direction in managing the *Herrings*; and that no Change be made in the State of the *Herrings* but at the Sight of one of the *Commissioners*; that is, that the *Commissioners* be satisfied by Inspection, that the *Herrings* have lain long enough in *Bulk* before they are first packed, and have been long enough packed, before they are repacked

repacked, and that they have been properly compressed, and the *Oil* sufficiently taken from them before they are closed up for Exportation. Sixthly, That each Barrel so closed up should be branded by the *Salter* in Presence of the *Commissioner* with a proper Mark and Number. Seventhly, That the Collector of the *Port* should not make out a *Clearance* or *Debenture*, but upon a *Certificate* signed by the *Salter* and *Commissioner*, signifying the Number of *Barrels*, and their Marks and Numbers; and upon another *Certificate* signed by the proper Officer, certifying the same Number with the same Marks to be shipped in his Presence. And lastly, that the Fisher should be freed from all Imposition on any Pretence whatsoever, and be allowed the Liberty of curing their Fish, and drying their Nets on Shore without any Tax on that Account or for the Use of useless Brushwood or Heath. These *Rules*, in a short Time, would bring our *Herrings* into Repute, encourage the *Natives* to prosecute the Fishing (the only Persons capable of succeeding) and discourage, and effectually put a Stop to fraudulent Debentures, which would perfectly answer the End proposed by the Government, as the Bounty would only be given to such as deserved it; such as had *cured Fish*, that would bring Credit to our *Market*.

There is this Objection, which will naturally occur, that as there are two Fishings carried on, one in the *Murray-firth* and Eastern Parts, and the other on the *North* and *North-west* Shores, that one Port could not serve both. That which I have been hitherto

therto describing is the latter, and by far the most considerable; and I only meant that one *Port* would be sufficient to carry on that *fishing* to Advantage; but if the other *fishing* was thought of Consequence enough to bear the Expence, another *Port* would serve that.

The additional Expence of one or both these *Ports* is only the *Commissioners* and *Salters*, and might be raised out of the Revenue allotted for encouraging *Fisheries* and *Manufactures* in *Scotland*, there being upwards of 20000 *l.* lying unemployed of that Fund,

I have hitherto confined myself to the *Herring-fishing*, as the most considerable, tho' the other of *Cod* and *Ling* might be made very valuable if properly encouraged. We cannot *cure* near so well nor so cheap these *Fish* as the *Dutch*; but if the *Premium* that is now given was confined to *Fish* shipped from such a *Port* as I have mentioned above, our Errors in *curing* might be corrected; and as the *Premium* proposed to be given for Vessels of twelve or fifteen *Tun* would increase the Number of these Vessels, so they would be employed the one Half of the Year in this *Cod-fishing*; and I take it, that a Number of *Lines* and *Hooks* given *gratis*, (which would amount to no great Expence) would be a great Means to further this *Branch* of *fishing* amongst these poor People.

The same *Frauds* are committed in the *Debentures* for these *Fish* as the *Herrings*, and constantly

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will

will be, whilst they depend upon the Honesty of these remote *Collectors*, &c. I thought to have hinted particularly at the *Errors* of this *Branch* of *fishing*; but this Discourse has swelled to such a Length, I am obliged to avoid it till another Opportunity.

The Methods above proposed, will, in a great Measure, make us better *Fishers* and better *Salters*, and bring us a better *Price* for what we send to Market. But there is something more wanting to enable us to make a Figure in this Trade, that is *Money*. The *Natives* of themselves, nor indeed all those commonly *now* concerned, have not sufficient *Stock* to *launch* out into this Trade. *For this Reason*, it would be absolutely necessary to raise a *Company* with a sufficient *Stock* to employ the *Natives*; there has been several Attempts to raise such a *Company*, but hitherto with *little Success*; a Spirit of growing hastily rich in the *Proprietors* of *Stock*, the *Covetousness* and *Profuseness* of their *Managers*, have generally ruined these *Undertakings*. However, these *Miscarriages* ought not to *discourage* all such; but *only* teach us to avoid the *Errors* that *occasioned* them.

I am persuaded, to raise Money by *Subscription* purely for that Purpose, would scarcely succeed; but it is not improbable but Money might be raised by a Lottery sufficient to answer the End; some for the Sake of the Lottery, others for the Sake of the

the *Fishery*, would make sufficient Number of *Subscribers*.

100000 *l.* in the Hands of proper Managers, would be sufficient for an *Essay*, and might be augmented as Occasion required, and might be raised in this Manner; let 500000 *l.* be raised by a *Lottery* of 100000 *Tickets*, at 5 *l.* each, distributed into Blanks and Prizes, as follows.

2	at 10000 <i>l.</i> each,	—	20000
4	5000	—	20000
8	2500	—	20000
12	2000	—	24000
24	1000	—	24000
48	500	—	24000
96	250	—	24000
192	200	—	38400
384	100	—	38400
768	50	—	38400
1535	25	—	38375
2272	20	—	45440
2599	15	—	38985
10000	10	<i>in Fishery Stock.</i>	100000
82056	Blanks		

100000

First drawn 1000

Last drawn 5000

500000

In this Scheme I would propose, that the 10000 ten Pound *Prizes* should be incorporated into a *capital Stock* of 1000 *Shares*, being 100 *l.* each *Share*, for carrying on the fishing; *that is*, the *Proprietors* of these *Prizes* should be by *Charter* erected into a *Company*, in order to carry on the *Herring* and other fishing on the *North* and *North-west Coast* of *Scotland*. That the *Company* should have *Liberty* to fish in all the *Locks*, *Creeks*, and *Bays*, (but not exclusive of others) without being subject to any *Toll* or *Duty* whatever for such *Liberty*. That the *Affairs* of this *Company* should be managed by five *Directors*, a *Governor*, *Vice-governor*, a *Casheer*, *Accomptant* and *Comptroller*, whose *Settlement* should be in such a *Port*, supposed to be fixed as the general *Mart* above hinted at.

That the first *Directors* be chosen by the *Parliament*, and to continue for one *Year*, and afterwards three of the *Directors* and one of the *Governors* to be chosen annually by a general *Court*, two *Directors* and a *Governor*, remaining in Office for two *Years*, but no longer, unless re-chosen.

That there should be a *Clause* in the *Charter* to prevent the *Embezzlement* of the *Company's* Money by *Salaries* and useless *Officers*, restraining the *Directors* from charging the *Proprietors* with a *Sum* exceeding 5000 *l.* for the Article of *Expence* of *Management*. This *Sum*, considering the *Country* they
are

are to live in, is sufficient for all the *Sallaries* it will be necessary for them to pay.

This 100000 *l.* raised in this Manner, without any Expence to the *Public*, and an insensible one to the *Proprietors*, would give *new* Life to *this* Trade, employ a vast Number of the *Natives* usefully that are now idle, and bring a reasonable Profit to the *Proprietors*; but that I look upon as the smallest Advantage arising to the *Public*, tho' it were certain that the *Company* should gain little or nothing, which can happen only from their own Mismanagement; yet that should not discourage the Government to undertake it, because this Sum *annually* employed for a few *Years*, would infallibly, in conjunction with the other Methods proposed in the Beginning of this Discourse, bring us at least a *Share*, if not the whole of this profitable Trade.

The common People are generally tenacious of their old Customs; and are never to be beat out of them all at once. They must have *Examples* set before them before they can be convinced of the *plainest* Truths. Such a *Company* as is *now* proposed, would answer that End, could bear the Expence of making *Experiments*, which a private Person cannot, and would be capable to *pursue* the Trade, tho' the *Fish* should not *swim* for a *Year* or *two*: But such an Accident would ruin all the private *Under-takers* now concerned in it.

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I have hitherto confined myself to the Consideration of the Advantages arising to the Inhabitants of these Parts from an industrious and prudent Management of the Fishery; but if we consider the Benefit which may be drawn from an Increase of that Trade to the Strength of the royal Navy, it will still appear to be more worthy the Consideration of the Public.

The Nation in general are agreed that some Measures are necessary to be used to enable his Majesty to man the Fleet with the proper Compliment of Men in an easier Method than has hitherto been fallen upon.

As that Affair is now under the Consideration of Parliament, Measures will be pursued, no doubt, that shall be thought most conducive to that End, and at the same Time easiest for the Subject.

A voluntary Register of the Seamen, and a certain annual Pension to such as inregister themselves, will, no doubt, be of great Use; but I am afraid that alone will not be sufficient to answer the End proposed.

If there was in the Kingdom as many Sailors as would serve to man the royal Navy and the Merchants Service also, it would be no great Difficulty to persuade the Sailors to enter into his Majesty's Service;
for

for granting that the Difference of Pay would make them prefer the Merchants Service, yet the Remainder would certainly go voluntarily into the King's, rather than starve at home for any considerable Time.

If this is the Case, that the Difficulty of manning the Navy arises from a real Scarcity of Sailors, the whole Matter turns into a Competition betwixt the King and the Merchant which of them shall have the Sailors, and he that offers most, no doubt, will carry it, if the Sailors have a Vote in it, which brings us under this Dilemma, that if the Government shall give such Encouragement to Sailors that the Merchant cannot exceed, Trade, so far as the Deficiency of Sailors will amount to, must stop. If the Encouragement is not so large but that the Merchant can give higher, any Præmium given by the Government will have no other Effect than to enhance the Wages of Sailors, and lay an additional Embargo upon Trade. I have a very great Opinion of the generous Temper of the *British* Sailors, but cannot help thinking they will prefer the Master who gives most to he that gives less, tho' the more honourable of the two.

As his Majesty is at present engaged in a War in Defence of the Trade and Honour of these Kingdoms, I am persuaded the Merchant, who is principally concerned in the Event of the War, will, no doubt, chearfully sacrifice the present Time,

Time, I mean the Profits that might be expected during the Continuance of the War, for the Sake of his future Security in time of Peace; but it may not be unworthy the Consideration of the Public to think on Means to hinder them from falling under the same Difficulty for the Time to come.

If it be admitted that the Difficulty in manning the Navy arises from a Scarcity of Sailors, it will easily be allowed, that all Measures that does not tend to encrease their Number, will fall short of the Success we expect.

That encreasing the Wages of Sailors either in his Majesty's or the Merchants Service, will have but a small Effect in encreasing the Number of Sailors in general, few, that have considered the Matter, will doubt. We cannot be so sanguine as to imagine that such Encouragement will bring any over from our Neighbours; if it in any Measure hinders their going abroad, it is all that can be expected.

There must be an annual Decrease of our Sailors of at least *every tenth Man*, by those, who, after a few Years, leaves off the Business, and settles at home; by such as grow superannuate and unfit for Service; by those who die natural Deaths, or of Distempers common to other Men; by such as die in hot Countries, and of Distempers and Accidents

to which their Way of Life is exposed ; by such as desert the Service, and settle in foreign Countries ; I say, by all these Means, we must compute that the Number of able bodied Seamen decrease at least one Tenth.

If this Decrease is not supplied by an equal Number, we must soon be reduced to very bad Circumstances, and I am afraid the Increase of late is not equal to the Decrease. But our Increase, to answer our Purposes, must exceed the Decrease as much as the whole Number of Sailors is less than the Number necessary to supply our Wants.

We have no other Way of breeding Seamen, but either as Apprentices aboard our Ships, or by our inland Navigation. Such as have lived to serve out a seven Years Apprentiship aboard a Merchantman, I believe will scarce be persuaded to go aboard a Man of War.

The Increase of our inland Navigation is then the most natural Way to get an Increase of Seamen, and if we examine the Matter to the Bottom, we shall find that the Advantage the *Dutch* and *French* have over us in manning their Fleets, is more owing to that, than to any Policy they use in that Matter.

The Fisheries in both Countries are vastly superior to ours, and more than sufficient to answer the

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Decrease

Decrease of Seamen necessary in their foreign Fleets.

This Nursery raises a Number of strong robust Hands, seasoned to all the Hardships of the Sea, and yet accustomed to earn so small Wages in the Fishery, that they always take the first Opportunity to leave this laborious Way of Life, and enter into the Merchant and the Government's Service, where they prove as good Sailors as those who have been from their Infancy on board a Merchantman.

The Fishery I have been speaking of, may, in a few Years, be made capable of employing 100000 Sailors, out of which it would be no Manner of Difficulty to man the royal Navy, and their Places would soon be supplied with Landmen, who are capable in a few Weeks of being made as useful in the Fishery as the most experienced Sailors.

As the Safety of *Great-Britain* depends entirely on the Royal Navy, and the manning of that Fleet depends upon the Increase of our Sailors, and especially those employ'd in the Inland Navigation; it would seem that *That* of itself should be Argument sufficient to induce every true Patriot to set about an Enquiry into the State of the Fishery, and to give it all the Encouragement that so useful a Branch of Trade requires.

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As this Island is happy in a numerous People, and so much of their Happiness depends upon the Increase of that useful Society of their SAILORS; and that such an universal Spirit of Charity reigns over the whole, as may appear by the great Increase of Charity-Schools; it may not be impossible to render that Charity useful towards manning our Fleet.

There are, in *Great-Britain*, about 28000 Boys educated in these Schools, of which I compute about 5000 may be annually put out to, or are fit for Trades: If the Managers of these Schools were hindered from putting the Boys to any other Trade, but to the Sea, it might produce a very good Effect; as in this manner.

When a Boy is about Fifteen, the Managers should bind him, by Indenture, to the Master of a Merchant-ship, for seven Years, four of which he should be obliged to serve the Merchant, receiving nothing but his Diet and Cloathing, and the other three he should be obliged to serve on board one of His Majesty's Ships for One Third Pay.

By this Means, after four Years, His Majesty would be annually supply'd with 5000 Sailors, for One Third Wages; and these Sailors, who are supposed to be about nineteen Years of Age, as capable of Service as ever they will be thereafter.

Such

Such an annual Increase of our Inland Navigation, would certainly enable His Majesty to man his Fleet, without the present troublesome Method of impressing.

It is possible I may be wrong in the Methods proposed for encouraging this Fishery; but it is impossible that I can be mistaken in what I affirm, that it is a Matter worthy the utmost Attention of the Legislature to bestow some Thoughts on, if there was no other Motive, but the Employment of so great a Number of People as inhabit that Fishing-Coast, whose idle Dispositions are of dangerous Consequences to the Peace of the Nation; but more especially, when that Employment must necessarily add so great a Strength to the Royal Navy.

I cannot be mistaken likewise, when I affirm that all the Nation wish that something were done towards that *great Work*; and that nothing could be more grateful to *Scotland* than such a Settlement; that nothing could tend more to quiet the Minds of those restless People (I mean the *Highlanders*;) or strengthen their too much *wavering* Loyalty; or increase their Affection to his *Majesty's Government*, than that the Government should by some Means enable them to earn their Bread in this beneficial Way; and in that manner convince them that they enjoy the *Protection* of that *Government* they ought to support. *For, at present, unless Poverty and absolute Slavery*

Slavery to the Commands of their many Petty-Tyrants may be accounted Protection, they enjoy nothing else; and these are Blessings, that none can wonder tho' they should not be very solicitous to preserve.

I'm persuaded, that if such a Work was begun, that all Parties in that Part of the united Kingdoms would forget their *Distinctions*; and would join to a Man to support that Government, that had rescued them from Poverty, and put into their starving Hands so *unvaluable* a Blessing. The Interest of half a Million of People inhabiting near the fourth Part of *Scotland* certainly deserves some Attention, especially when their Happiness may be purchased, and so great an Addition to the real Strength of the united Kingdoms at so small, or rather at no Expence, as it certainly may if the foregoing Scheme is rational.

F I N I S.

There is no doubt that the Government of this country is doing its best to protect the rights of the people, and to maintain the peace and order of the country. It is the duty of every citizen to support the Government and to obey the laws of the country.

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